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Coming on heels of Brit arrest of former Nazis, publication of pub opinion survey of nationalistic, neo-Nazi, and anti-semitic trends in Fed Rep has kicked up first class row in West Ger. Dismay and bitterness of officials and press is in part explainable by fact that findings of survey were probably accurate-- and Gers know it. This knowledge and their unwillingness to admit it has, however, led to attribution of series of speculative reasons for publication of survey at this time which seems to me most damaging aspect of situation.

Timing of release was unquestionably unfortunate. This was something over which we had no control once leak had occurred (re ourtel 3350 Jan 20) but for which I do not believe we should attempt publicly to apologize. Many Gers of course do not understand why we did not muzzle press, lie about survey or refuse to release it. We had to explain that that is not way American democracy functions.

We of course recognize immediate ill effects produced by combination of arrests and survey but it is still too early to estimate long range impact which in my personal opinion is not likely to prove as damaging as presently indicated. It is, however, true that sensitive and uncertain Ger self-esteem has been

ounded and group favoring close collaboration with West is hurt by

implications drawn from fortuitous combination of events. Rightist

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elements moreover have seen "statistically demonstrated" that their position has augmented popular backing. We have acquired a reputation for sly opposition to those whom we publicly support and doubt has been raised outside Fed Rep re Ger utility in defense of free world. On other hand, very vehemence of denials may require Gers to do some housecleaning on their own, and Chanc's handling of situation has ~~staved~~ forestalled domestic criticism and may have improved his standing politically.

Granted impact created by Brit arrests, it would seem nevertheless that consternation created by release of survey indicates that misapprehensions may have existed in US-Fed Rep relations. That there is a trend toward nationalism and a yearning for authoritarian rule in West Ger should come as a shock to no one. Nationalism is still perhaps strongest force in Eur and authoritarianism is deep in Ger heritage. We have sought in our basic studies on Ger to convey this interpretation. Survey itself shows no startling change in sentiments revealed in earlier surveys, which were made public at the time.

That recent trends as revealed in survey did create stir is, to our minds, indicative that there may be an element of unreality in image created in both Ger and possibly some Amer minds regarding political nature of West

Ger. Illusions in these matters are a slippery basis of relations

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between two countries. Undoubtedly a more realistic outlook could have been developed in a less damaging way. But at least we are now on bed rock and there is, we hope, a minimum of wishful thinking about political scene in Germany.

With this in mind our problem is two-fold. One relates to broad policy problem--how without illusion to take Gers for what they are and calculate what we can do in our relations with them to further Amer national interests.

Second relates to what can be done here not only to repair what damage may have been caused by arrests and survey but further to give clearest possible indication that we have not altered our determination to admit Ger as an equal member of Western community. This is essential if democratic elements in Ger are to receive that encouragement necessary to enable them to grow and to be strengthened. At same time, however, Gers must also recognize that only through their membership in such a community can they achieve that status of equality that they now demand.

Events are requiring that renewed US leadership be exercised to bring this community into being.

As Adenauer is symbol of what we are trying to achieve in Germany, his position and his influence could now be strengthened at a critical time by us if he were to be invited to visit US at an early date.

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Churchill has already been there, Mayer has announced his intention of going, and to receive Adenauer in this series of visits would, in my opinion, be positive contribution we can now make here.

Timing of visit can be worked out subsequently; but if announcement of such an invitation could be made public by Chanc in very near future it would have immediate benefit.

As court will probably require two or three weeks after Feb 20 consider govt's request for opinion and Fundestar action will be delayed accordingly; that period at end of Feb or early Mar would appear to give Chanc best opportunity to make visit.

REBER

Auth.: Samuel Reber

Curtel to Dept 3350, Jan 20 - CN-5555

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